

Parents - If you haven't already read the pages on ["Developing Character in Your Children,"](#) you might want to go there first before reading these pages.



**Dependability Awards**

Have your children think of objects that must be reliable for their lives to go smoothly and safely. Let them draw pictures of those objects and color them.

Then let them cut the objects out and either glue them on poster board or hang them by string attached to a paper plate to create a mobile.

When they show dependability, you can give them an award made to look like one of the objects they cut out, but with their name on it, and they can place it on the poster board or mobile.

Examples of such objects might be a car, tire, computer, bridge, chair, clock, etc.



Does it matter to you if your car repairman is dependable?

## Dependability Vs. inconsistency

"Fulfilling what I consented to do, even if it means unexpected sacrifice."

**Tips for Parents to Encourage Dependability**

Children who have learned to be dependable are delightful to be around and earn the trust of their parents to give them greater privileges. One of the goals of parenting is to raise children who are able to show responsibility, independent of adult supervision. But it happens in small steps from early childhood.

When a parent requests even small children to do a task, he needs to follow through to be sure the child has done the task completely and well. The parent needs to work with the child to be sure he is keeping a good attitude about the tasks he is given and that he is willing to go back and fix mistakes.

Of course, modeling dependability to him is the most powerful way of instilling this character quality as a value in his life. Reward your child with lavish praise when he has shown dependability in tasks and in keeping his word.

Be sure he is exposed to good examples of those who kept their word sacrificially. Reading about the signers of our Declaration of Independence is a powerful way to show the value of keeping one's word. The "Message to Garcia" is an impressive short true story on one who fulfilled a seemingly impossible assignment faithfully.

Talk with your children about those who must be extremely dependable for the safety of those they work with and of the public (fire fighters, policemen, car repairmen, bus drivers, etc.) What about the accuracy of detail needed for computer to run smoothly, for playgrounds to be safe, of parachutes to be folded correctly, of soldiers to have proper training in using weapons? How many people do we depend on to keep us safe? Your child will begin to value dependability when he thinks about these things!

**Enemies of Dependability**

- Impulsive, unrealistic promises
- Discouragement that makes the task look too hard
- Distraction from the task-too much flexibility
- Dishonesty
- Selfish desires given higher value than responsibility
- Grumbling about the task
- Unwillingness to correct mistakes
- Unwillingness to make sacrifices to fulfill promises.